


THE HEART
of
ABRAHAM LINCOLN



Wynne Phillips



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THE STORY-LIFE OF LINCOLN, THE LINCOLN
STORY-CALENDAR, AND THE LITTLE
LIFE OF LINCOLN

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THE HEART OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

THE MOTHER-HEART

A hundred years ago a little heart began to beat in a log hovel in the woods of Kentucky—a heart that was destined to swell with the hopes and throb with the griefs of the greatest nation on earth.

But its mother never “knew.” It is doubtful if Nancy Hanks Lincoln ever raised her eyes in hope—as many a mother does hope against hope—that *her* son might become the first man in the neighborhood or nation. There seemed to be nothing ahead, in the poor, hard lot of her baby boy for Nancy Lincoln to ponder in her heart. She would have been full content for him to grow up kind to his father and mother and sister, and good to their backwoods neighbors, so few and far between. The little boy’s father was a tough, hearty, well-meaning, restless,

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shiftless, thriftless man whom she had taught, after they were married, to scrawl his own name.

In their crude, primitive way, Thomas and Nancy Lincoln were religious. Both believed in the heart life. They heard it spoken of at camp-meeting as "experimental religion." Either would have been proud to have their son grow to be a local exhorter or a pioneer preacher. Whatever else Abraham Lincoln lacked in his early life, he had true heart culture. His mother, in her humility, builded far better than she knew—a palace instead of a cabin—while she was teaching little Abe to be good, and kind, and true. She knew it not, but she gave her child the master-key to the grandest life of experimental religion ever lived by mortal man. No wonder the grateful son held such a mother in sacred and loving memory, exclaiming fervently:

"All I am or hope to be I owe to my sainted mother!"

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THE HEART IN THE HOME

Even the dull and barren days of Lincoln's childhood radiate with the warmth of his heart. He was happy with his sister, two years older, and she was always proud of her brother. Their mother sometimes read to them, at dusk, from the Bible, "The Pilgrim's Progress," and others of the very few books they had in those pioneer days. Little Abe, only five or six years old, would work hard and long to bring home spicewood bushes to make a pleasant odor and a brighter firelight while his mother read to them. The sweetness and light of those early memories remained with Lincoln always.

Nicolay and Hay, his secretaries and biographers, mention a significant little story which they give in Lincoln's own words. When asked if he could remember anything of the War of 1812, he replied:

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“Nothing but this. I had been fishing one day and caught a little fish which I was taking home. I met a soldier on the road, and, having been always told at home that we must be good to the soldiers, I gave him my fish.”

When Abraham was nine he lost his mother. She was smitten with a strange and terrible disease which attacked the early settlers, and which they called “the milk-sick,” as it seized the cattle also. Nancy Lincoln knew she was doomed to die. She called Sarah and Abraham to her bedside, and made them promise to be good to each other and take care of their poor father. It was a great grief to the little boy that his blessed mother had to be buried “without benefit of clergy.” Years often passed without the pioneers even seeing a minister. It is told that the first letter little Abraham ever wrote was to beseech good Parson Elkin, who had known his mother in “old Kentucky,”

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to come and preach a sermon over her grassy mound in the edge of the clearing. This the kind old man did the following summer.

Dennis Hanks, an older cousin, who had come to live in their desolate cabin, used to say of Lincoln: "Abe's kindness, humor, love of humanity, hatred of slavery, all came from his mother. I am free to say Abe was a 'mother's boy'."

Thomas Lincoln was lonely, restless and moody. All that two children of nine and eleven could do, Abraham and Sarah did to cheer and comfort their forlorn father. But he disappeared one day and, after several weeks' absence, he returned, bringing them a stepmother with three children of her own. The boy soon learned to love his new mother, and she at once saw that "Abe was no common boy." Long afterwards, the second Mrs. Lincoln said to W. H. Herndon, one of Lincoln's biographers:

"I can say what scarcely one

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mother in a thousand can say, Abe never gave me a cross word or look, and never refused, in fact or appearance, to do anything I asked him. I had a son John, who was raised with Abe. Both were good boys, but I must say, both being now dead, that Abe was the best boy I ever saw or expect to see."

Mrs. Lincoln had good reason to speak in the highest praise of her stepson's devotion. He never ceased to be grateful for her sympathy and kindness to him when a boy, encouraging him in his reading, and persuading his father to let the boy go to school a few weeks now and then. While he was a struggling lawyer, almost in middle life, he devoted his first five-hundred-dollar fee to the purchase of land to make his stepmother more comfortable in her old age. A legal friend advised him to provide the old woman with a mere life-interest, but he indignantly replied:

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“I shall do no such thing. It is a poor return, at best, for all the good woman’s devotion and fidelity to me, and there is not going to be any half-way business about it!”

Abraham’s father took him out of school, whenever he had been allowed to go at all, on the slightest pretexts. Strong as the lad was, and work as hard as he might, he could never earn more than twenty-five or thirty cents a day. This meager pay his father always took and kept. Most youths would have left home in disgust.

But Abraham Lincoln stood by, even after his sister died and there was no one left of his own family but his father. He made thirty dollars peddling “notions” on the way from Indiana to Illinois. He seems to have given that money to his father, though he was past twenty-one, for, when he started out for himself in life, the first thing he did was to split rails for a suit of jeans,

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paying four hundred rails per yard! He did not leave his father's family until he had helped build their first cabin in Illinois, cleared and plowed fifteen acres around it, and fenced it all in with the historic black-walnut rails that, thirty years later, became the wonder of the world.

After Lincoln had served his term in Congress, his friend, W. G. Greene called on Thomas Lincoln in his log hut in Coles County. Even then the father had not forgiven his son for his studious habits. He said to Greene:

"I s'pose Abe's still a-foolin' hisself with eddication. I tried to stop it, but he's got that fool idee in his head an it can't be got out. Now I haint got no eddication, but I git along better than if I had."

In 1851 Abraham Lincoln heard that his father was very ill. Legal engagements prevented his going to Coles County. But he wrote to his step-brother:

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"I sincerely hope father may recover his health; but at all events, tell him to remember to call upon, and confide in our great and merciful Maker, who will not turn away from him in any extremity. He notes the fall of the sparrow, and numbers the hairs of our heads, and He will not forget the dying man who puts his trust in Him."

This was Abraham's last message to the father, who had treated him with harsh injustice while lenient and partial to his stepchildren.

After his father died, Abraham had to protect his stepmother against the impracticable schemes of her own son, who wanted to sell her land, including the quarter-section Lincoln had given her, in order to move to Missouri. The letters Abraham wrote to his stepbrother at this time were models of masterful kindness.

The last time Lincoln saw his stepmother was just before he left for

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Washington to become President. He had to travel across the prairie country, in February, in an open buggy, running a real risk of his life in fording a swollen river. Lamon thus describes, in part, their final interview:

“The meeting between him and the old lady was of a most affectionate and tender character. She fondled him as her own ‘Abe,’ and he her as his own mother. Their parting was very touching. She embraced him with deep emotion, and said she was sure she would never behold him again, for she felt that his enemies would assassinate him. He replied cheerfully, ‘No, no, mother; they would not do that. Trust in the Lord and all will be well; we will see each other again’.”

But they never did.

THE HELPER OF THE HELPLESS

From a child Abraham Lincoln was ever the champion of the helpless. His

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first "composition" in school was against cruelty to animals. Many stories are told of his defending the defenceless. One day, on finding some boys using a shingle in putting live coals on a terrapin's back, angry tears came into his eyes, and he snatched the shingle from the ringleader's hands. With it he dashed the hot coals from the turtle's back and "preached against such cruelty, claiming that an ant's life is as sweet to it as ours is to us."

Late one cold night Abe and some companions found a man they knew lying drunk in a freezing mud-puddle beside the road. The others said, "He has made his bed, now let him lie in it!" But to Abe this seemed monstrous. The man was large and heavy, but the youth carried the apparently lifeless body eighty rods to a deserted cabin, where he made a fire and warmed and nursed the man back to himself.

Not long after this, while the family were moving to Illinois, they found, af-

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ter their heavy wagon, drawn by two yoke of oxen, had crossed an ice-filled stream, that they had left a little dog on the other side. It was late; to turn back with their clumsy team was out of the question. The rest were in favor of going on and leaving "the little nuisance" behind. But Abe could see the dog running up and down the opposite bank, yelping in distress. Long afterward, referring to this incident, Lincoln said:

"I could not bear the idea of abandoning even a dog. Pulling off shoes and socks I waded across the stream, and triumphantly returned with the shivering animal under my arm. His frantic leaps of joy and other evidences of a dog's gratitude amply repaid me for all the exposure I had undergone."

After he had settled in New Salem, while captain in the Black Hawk War, he risked his life by stepping in between the muskets of some soldiers

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and an old Indian they were about to shoot as a spy. With flashing eyes he dared the crowd, saying: "Take it out of me, but you shan't touch this Indian!" He did this in spite of the prevalent belief there that "the only good Indian is a dead Indian."

Lincoln was a knight errant in the cause of the lower orders of creation. Once, while riding along, on the Eighth Circuit of Illinois, he and his law companions laughed at the plight of a poor pig helplessly stuck in the mud, and squealing lustily. But the distress of the animal soon overcame his keen sense of the ludicrous, and in spite of the jeers of his comrades, he went back to the porker's rescue, excusing himself by saying: "If that farmer lost his pig, his poor little children might have to go barefoot all winter."

On another occasion his friends were annoyed and not a little amused to see him hitch his horse and catch two young birds fluttering on the ground in the

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edge of a grove, and go hunting from tree to tree until he found the nest from which the two fledglings had fallen. An hour or so later, when he caught up with the friends again, they laughed at his childish waste of time.

"Gentlemen," said he, "you may laugh, but I couldn't have slept well to-night if I had not saved those birds. Their cries would have rung in my ears."

Lincoln could not see suffering anywhere without trying to relieve it. A Springfield woman used to tell of standing at her mother's gate, sobbing, because the hackman had failed to appear and take her and her trunk to the station for her first outing on a train. Mr. Lincoln came along just then and asked what was the matter.

"Cheer up," said he, "and come along. We'll have to hurry!" He shouldered the trunk and strode away, while the little girl trotted after him, drying her eyes as she ran. He put the trunk and

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the girl on the train, told her to "have a good time," and kissed her good-bye.

"It was just like him!" exclaimed that little girl grown to womanhood.

His relatives were all illiterate ne'er-do-wells, but instead of avoiding them on this account, he seemed to feel that they needed his sympathy and help the more. During the great debates with Douglas, Lincoln arrived at Charleston, Illinois, worn out with speaking and travel. It was stormy, and he needed the rest to fortify himself for the renewal of the struggle on the morrow. He prepared to go out from the comforts of the hotel to call on a relative of his stepmother's. His friends remonstrated, but he seemed surprised at such a suggestion, exclaiming:

"Why, Aunt's heart would be broken if I should leave town without going to see her!"

And he set out and walked several miles across the muddy prairie in the rain.

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After his election to the Presidency an old woman, whom he called "Aunt Sally," came from New Salem to say good-bye to "Abe" before he "went to Washington to be President." The President-elect was standing in the room placed at his disposal in the State Capitol, talking with two men of national renown when the old woman entered, shy and embarrassed. He saw her at once and hurried across the room to meet his old friend. Taking both her hands in his, he led her to the seat of honor, and presented his distinguished visitors to her, putting her quite at ease by saying as related in Miss Tarbell's "He Knew Lincoln":

"Gentlemen, this is a good old friend of mine. She can make the best flap-jacks you ever tasted, for she has baked them for me many a time."

After quite a long stay Aunt Sally pulled out from her basket a huge pair of coarse, yarn socks she had knit for Mr. Lincoln. Taking the stockings by

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the toes he held one down each side of his gigantic feet, exclaiming:

"She's got my latitude and longitude about right, hasn't she?" In words of tender appreciation he promised to wear those socks in the White House, and think of her as he did so.

Great joker as Lincoln was, with his inordinate sense of humor, he was incapable of winking behind a good old woman who had been kind to him. He never said or did things for mere politeness' sake. He had none of the *veneer* of society but possessed the true *heart of oak*.

It was at New Salem that Lincoln earned the name of "Honest Abe." Through the kindness of his heart he seemed to endear himself to everybody in the village. People talk sometimes of Lincoln's religion. He knew his Bible and believed in prayer and praise. But his belief was not formal; it was the heart religion which is expressed by the "Ancient Mariner":

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“He prayeth well who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.”

It was a true index to his character, that when no one hired him to work he did not allow himself to be idle. While staying with one of the neighbors, among whom he was always welcome, he would rock the cradle, play with the children, joke with the young folks and tell his best stories to the aged. It was said of him, in practical paraphrase of the definition of “pure religion and undefiled,” he used to “visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and” —*chop their wood!*

One of Lincoln’s law-partners once said of him:

“Lincoln is a man of heart, aye, as gentle as a woman’s and as tender—but he has a will as strong as iron.”

LINCOLN’S LOVE OF WOMEN

“Did you ever write out a story in your mind?” Lincoln asked a

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friend. "I did when I was a little codger. One day a wagon with a lady and two girls and a man, broke down near us, and while they were fixing up, they cooked in our kitchen. The woman had books and read us stories, and they were the first of the kind I ever heard. I took a great fancy to one of the girls, and when they were gone I thought of her a great deal, and one day when I was sitting out in the sun by the house I wrote out a story in my mind.....I think that was the beginning of love with me."

Abraham, when a lad, hanging around the schoolhouse one afternoon, when he was not permitted to attend, prompted Kate Roby, the "pretty girl of the settlement," in spelling *defied*, by pointing to his eye when she was about to say "y." Lamon says "Abe was evidently half in love with her," but she married his friend, Allen Gentry, son of the "great man" of Gentryville."

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In "The Early Life of Lincoln," Miss Tarbell writes:

Lincoln's old friends in Indiana have left many tales of how he "went to see the girls," of how he brought in the biggest backlog and made the brightest fire; then of how the young people, sitting around it, watching the way the sparks flew, told their fortunes. He helped pare apples, shell corn and crack nuts. He took the girls to meeting and to spelling school.

Mrs. Josiah Crawford, wife of "Old Blue-Nose," for whom both Abraham and his sister worked as hired man and maid, used to say:

"Abe was a sensitive lad, never coming where he was not wanted. He was tender and kind, like his sister. He took off his poor old hat when addressing a lady. After meals he lingered behind to gossip and joke with the women folks, and these pleasant stolen confidences were generally broken

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up with the exclamation: 'Well, this won't buy the child a coat!' and the long-legged hired boy would stride away to join his master."

But Lincoln's first true love was Ann Rutledge, the comely daughter of the keeper of Rutledge's Tavern, where he boarded, for a time, in New Salem. Abraham and Ann studied grammar together, and the tall boarder soon lost his heart. Then he learned that she was engaged to marry an unworthy young man named McNamar, who had gone east, and had not even been heard of for some time.

William O. Stoddard, the well-known author, and only living private secretary to President Lincoln, has written touchingly of Lincoln's love affair.

It is not known precisely when Ann Rutledge told her suitor that her heart was his, but early in 1835 she permitted it to be understood that she would marry Abraham Lincoln as soon as his legal

studies should be completed. That was a glorious summer for him; the brightest, sweetest, hopefullest he yet had known. It was the fairest time he was ever to see; for even now, as the golden days came and went, they brought increasing shadow on their wings.

On the 25th of August, 1835, just before the summer died, Ann Rutledge passed away from earth—but she never faded from the heart of Abraham Lincoln, and the shadow of that great darkness never entirely lifted from him. It was then that he discovered, in a strange collection of verses, those lines of William Knox, ever afterward his favorite poem, beginning:

“Oh why should the spirit of
mortal be proud?”

There were well-grounded fears that he might do himself some injury, and a watch was vigilantly kept. He had been, to that hour, a man of marvelous poise and self-control, but, when they came and told him she was dead, his heart

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and will, and even his brain itself gave way. He was frantic for a time, seeming even to lose the sense of his own identity, and all New Salem said "Abe Lincoln's insane!" He piteously moaned and raved:

"I never can be reconciled to have the snow, rain and storms beat upon her grave!"

Too much has been made, by several of Lincoln's biographers, of his so-called love affair with Mary Owens. Years after the death of Miss Rutledge, Miss Owens came to visit her sister in New Salem. The sister announced her intention of making a match between Mary and Abe Lincoln. That of itself was enough to prevent their caring for each other. Lincoln called on Miss Owens and wrote several letters, seeming to feel under obligation to marry the girl because of what her sister had said. But Mary Owens was a girl of spirit, as well as good-looking and intelligent, and she cut the Gordian

knot by refusing Lincoln outright. In his relief from this ridiculous tangle, Lincoln wrote a confidential, but indiscreet letter to his friend, Mrs. Browning. This letter she afterward permitted to be published. This atrocious breach of confidence caused Mr. Lincoln and others considerable annoyance in after years.

“The course of true love never did run smooth” with Abraham Lincoln. While in partnership with his law friend, Major John T. Stuart, his partner’s cousin, Mary Todd, came from Louisville, Kentucky, to live with her sister. Of course, the rising young attorney soon met the Kentucky belle. Miss Todd was well educated, bright and pretty, and had social *savoir faire*, which Lincoln so sadly lacked. He ardently admired her from their first meeting. He found her brilliant, witty and ambitious. She had boasted to her girl friends that she meant some day to be mistress of the White House.

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There was a serious misunderstanding. Lincoln was morbid, and Miss Todd was high-strung. Misapprehensions were unavoidable. Lincoln became melancholy, and his bosom friend, Speed, invited him to Kentucky, where he recovered, to a degree, his mental balance. On returning to Springfield he threw himself into politics. He published a humorous letter against the State Auditor, James Shields, a vain, pompous little Irishman, signing it "Rebecca of the Lost Townships." This was followed by another "Rebecca" letter, not written by Lincoln, but by Miss Mary Todd and a girl friend. Shields was furious and demanded the name of the writer. Lincoln told the editor to give his, Lincoln's, name only. Shields challenged him to a duel. Lincoln chose ridiculous weapons and imposed absurd conditions, which showed that, though Shields would have done his best to kill Lincoln, he would not willingly have harmed Shields. When

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the combatants were brought face to face, explanations became possible and the foolish duel was avoided.

Miss Todd's heart must have softened toward the tall knight who had stood ready to risk his life for her sake, for they were married the following November (1842). He was devoted and thoughtful and kind to her through more than twenty years of married life. Her devotion, thrift, and ambition must have done much to inspire and advance him in his wonderful career. Mrs. Lincoln once said:

"Mr. Lincoln was the kindest man and most loving husband in the world."

Whenever anything occurred that would gratify her ambition, his heart always turned to his "little Mary." When he received the telegram announcing his nomination as candidate for the Presidency, he explained, as he broke away from a crowd of congratulating fellow citizens:

"There's a little woman down on

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Eighth street who will be glad to hear the news—you must excuse me until I inform her.”

The night of November 6, 1860, when Mr. Lincoln learned, about midnight, that he was elected President, he hurried home and burst into the room in which his wife lay asleep, exclaiming: “Mary! *Mary!* MARY! *We’re Elected!*”

“GREAT-HEART” IN THE WHITE-HOUSE

Abraham Lincoln went to Washington a martyr at heart. He lived each day as if it were his last on earth. He had much before him which he hoped to be able to do. He found chaos everywhere—a panic of statecraft in the North, and an epidemic of anarchy in the South. The leading minds of the country seemed to have gone daft. They advocated the most hair-brained, foolhardy schemes. Seward, his greatest rival, now Secretary of State, actually proposed that Lincoln keep his

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hands off the helm and let him, Seward, steer the Ship of State. Chase, McClellan, and, later, Stanton, each felt that he, and he alone, was divinely called to save the Union. They did not believe in their chief. The party which elected Lincoln looked on with misgivings. They felt that the people had been carried away by increasing enthusiasm; and that "the Rail-Splitter" had been washed up into the White House by a tidal wave of popular frenzy, like a stranded sea monster, and left high and dry and out of his natural element.

While Lincoln's subordinates insulted him by patronizing him,

"He knew to bidè his time."

He replied to Seward with the same masterful tenderness that he had addressed his stepbrother ten years earlier, when John Johnston proposed a scheme about as foolish and visionary as Seward's plan for getting up a war

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with England! Lincoln had practised ruling his own spirit and forgiving in advance, in his dealings with his father. He had learned lessons in self-repression, self-denial, and self-sacrifice, while smarting under the sense of the injustice done him by his father, who called him lazy and a fool, as he lay beside his wooden shovel, trying to study in the flickering firelight—preparing himself, heart and soul, for these very crises in his own and his country's life.

There was something superhuman in Lincoln's charity. No mortal man ever possessed more absolutely the love that "suffereth long and is kind;—beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." Those about him comprehended his character the more slowly because of his stories. These were so unexpected and strange that people failed to grasp their deep import. When self-appointed delegations came to protest against this or to urge that, the kindness of his heart al-

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ways rescued the situation with a story. Ah, those stories! The sympathy in them was exquisite. Instead of containing a hidden sting, they were full of balm for the smarts and wounds of his hearers. Men sometimes scoffed because Lincoln laughed while telling them. But he did not laugh so much at his own stories as *with* his hearers from the pure pleasure of giving pleasure. If ever a face was illumined by the glowing heart behind it, it was Abraham Lincoln's. This was why women left his presence exclaiming:

"They say 'Mr. Lincoln's an ugly man.' It is a wicked lie—I think he has the loveliest face I ever saw!" "Homely" may express it, but Lincoln was never "ugly." His face often shone "like the face of an angel," for his sympathy made him an angel of light to many a breaking heart.

It was Lincoln's heart that prompted the Emancipation Proclamation long before it was promulgated—but it was

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his head that held it safe until the fullness of the time was come. Then he did it with fear and trembling at first, but afterwards his heart rejoiced.

The Gettysburg Address is warm with the great love of Lincoln's life. A new story illustrative of his homely, spontaneous sympathy is printed for the first time in *The Lincoln Story-Calendar*. It is of a modest old Quakeress, who fainted in front of the speaker's stand just before Lincoln arose to deliver the immortal address. He saw that the crowd was pressing tighter around her, so he came to her rescue.

"Here," he commanded, "hand that lady up to me." He tenderly placed the unconscious woman in the rocking-chair that had been reserved for himself. When she began to revive, she found herself being fanned by the President of the United States, on a platform in the presence of thousands of people! This was too much for a shrinking old lady in plain garb. "I—feel—better

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now," she protested feebly. "I want—to go—back there."

"O, no indeed," laughed Mr. Lincoln kindly. "You are all right here. It was all we could do to pull you up out of that crowd, and we could never stick you down into it again!"

It seems strange now that Stanton, of all men, was among the very first to appreciate the simple grandeur of the Gettysburg Address—Stanton, rude, sneering, caustic, contemptuous, obstinate Stanton—who took pleasure in insulting Lincoln when they first met, eight years earlier, in the great McCormick Reaper case; Stanton, who had always called Lincoln a gorilla, an imbecile, and a fool!—with many profane expletives. Mind could never have conquered the obdurate soul of Secretary Stanton. It was Lincoln's heart alone that wrought this greatest miracle of his life. In spite of Stanton's atrocious treatment of him, President Lincoln recognized the sterling worth and

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patriotism of his snarling enemy, and said that he was glad to bear Stanton's wrath for the good he could do the nation. People at home and abroad freely criticised the President for allowing his Secretary of War to oppose and stultify him in so many trivial ways. But, little by little, as a trainer breaks in a fractious horse, Lincoln tightened the curb, until one day, in utter kindness, yet with adamant firmness, the President came to say, "Mr. Secretary, it will *have* to be done." And it was done.

After that last Cabinet meeting on the fatal fourteenth of April (Good Friday), 1865, Stanton remarked, in devoted pride, to the Attorney-General, "Didn't our chief look grand today!"

According to a trusted servant in the White House, Mr. Lincoln, on the last day of his life, spoke in the highest praise of General Robert E. Lee. Robert Lincoln had just returned with Grant from the front, and had Lee's

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photograph in his hand. The President looked at it long and tenderly, remarking to his son:

"It is the face of a noble, brave man."

Some time before this, he was heard to say of General "Stonewall" Jackson:

"He is a brave, Presbyterian soldier. If we, in the North, had such generals this war would not drag along so."

He appreciated the Southern leaders, and had all charity and tenderness for the South. After he was gone a compartment in a private cabinet was found crammed with threats of assassination. He never referred to these except to say that there was no use in taking precautions or being afraid.

"If they want to kill me," he remarked, "they'll do it, somehow."

He lived constantly in the spirit which breathed out its love of all mankind on that first Good Friday, long ago, saying:

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“Forgive them, they know not what they do.”

That very night the conquering chief became, in fact, what he had long been at heart—a martyr. The next morning, at twenty-two minutes after seven, when Lincoln’s heart ceased to beat, it was Stanton—loyal, devoted, loving, heart-broken Stanton—who closed the dying eyes of Abraham Lincoln, and then turned away, his whole frame trembling with suppressed emotion, whispering tenderly:

“He is the *man* for the ages!”

A HEART-BROKEN PEOPLE

The world stood aghast and the American people were stricken with grief. Even the Southern leaders suddenly realized that the South had lost its best friend in the North. As for the Northern people, they met on April 19th (Patriots’ Day), in their own places, in city and country, and

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“Wept with the passion of an angry grief,”

while the simple funeral services were being held in the White House. Twenty-five millions of men, women and children are estimated to have gathered all over the civilized world and sobbed out their sorrow over the death of the well-beloved President. Strong men, never known to weep over their own personal troubles and private griefs, broke down and cried like little children when they heard of the murder of Abraham Lincoln. But he did not become a multi-millionaire in hearts at a single bound. It was by no accidental combination of events that the whole world wept by Lincoln's bier. He began by endearing himself to his own family, and his few backwoods relations and neighbors. Then New Salem learned to love him, as it had never loved anyone else. So of Springfield, and the Eighth Circuit of Illinois. When the supporters and *clacqueurs* of

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Seward, Chase and Cameron came to the Chicago Convention they failed to comprehend Lincoln's strange popularity. They did not realize, in their perplexity, that they were contending against the "principalities and powers" of Lincoln's all-inclusive heart. They laughed at the "Rail-splitter," and sneered at his "coarse, clumsy jokes." Then they accounted for what they could not comprehend by calling him "a man of the people." This was true, but only in the highest sense. Lincoln was the man of heart—and the people recognized him as a man after their own hearts. That was why his popularity spread over the North like a prairie fire. It was the great wave of heart responding to heart that carried him to the White House. It was this that made him the object of such widespread love and loyalty. A large part of the patriotism of the soldiers was their love for Abraham Lincoln. He seemed to be the per-

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sonification of their country, threatened and wronged. He meant more to the people than "Uncle Sam"—he was "Father Abraham!" When President Lincoln reluctantly issued call after call for soldiers, and more and more soldiers, the people seemed never to tire of responding:

"We are coming, Father Abraham,
Three hundred thousand more."

The soldiers said among themselves: "He cares for us! he loves us!" and they cheerfully, gladly, even humorously—to be like *him*,—marched into the jaws of death for his dear sake. It was far different from the love Napoleon inspired in his troopers, for their loyalty flagged and finally failed. It was Napoleon's selfish heartlessness that made him a colossal failure. It was Lincoln's self-giving heart which crowned his life with immortal success. From early boyhood he had lived his

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life a burning and shining illustration of his own words:

“With malice toward none; with charity for all.”

LINCOLN'S LOVE FOR “LITTLE TAD”

Mrs. Lincoln and “little Tad” remained behind in the White House while the others went on that sad and winding funeral journey to Springfield, Illinois. Beside the long coffin of the President was the small casket of “little Willie,” who had died during the first year of his presidency. Willie's illness became most alarming during a grand reception, one of the first which Mrs. Lincoln gave in the White House. He had taken cold, but the doctor said there was no danger, and advised her to proceed with the function.

Elizabeth Keckley, a seamstress in the White House, tells the following sad story in her book, “Behind the Scenes”:

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During the evening Mrs. Lincoln came up stairs several times, and stood by the bedside of the suffering boy. She loved him with a mother's heart, and her anxiety was great. The night passed slowly; morning came, and Willie was worse. He lingered a few days and died. God called the beautiful spirit home, and the house of joy was turned into the house of mourning. I was worn out with watching, and was not in the room when Willie died, but was immediately sent for. I assisted in washing and dressing him, and then laid him on the bed, when Mr. Lincoln came in. I never saw a man so bowed down with grief. He came to the bed, lifted the cover from the face of the child, gazed at it long and earnestly, murmuring: "My poor boy! He was too good for this earth. God has called him home. I know he is much better off in Heaven, but then we loved him so. It is hard—hard—to have him die!"

Great sobs choked his utterance. He buried his head in his hands, and his tall frame was convulsed with emotion. I stood at the foot of the bed, my eyes full of tears, looking at the man in silent, awe-stricken wonder. His grief unnerved him, and made him a weak, passive child. I did not dream that his rugged nature could be so moved; I shall never forget those solemn moments. There is a grandeur as well as a simplicity about the picture that will never fade.

Mrs. Lincoln was inconsolable. In one of her paroxysms of grief, the President kindly bent over his wife, took her by the arm, and gently led her to a window. With a solemn, stately gesture, he pointed to the lunatic asylum, saying:

“Mother, do you see that large, white building on the hill yonder? Try to control your grief, or it will drive you mad, and we may have to send you there.”

This gentle warning was no misap-

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prehension. Her girlish ambition to be mistress of the White House had been fulfilled—but with how many sorrows! The President's mansion was a house of mourning nearly all the time the Lincolns lived in it.

Mr. Lincoln seldom spoke of Willie. Robert was away at Harvard College, and at the front, as one of General Grant's *aides*. Thus the President's wealth of love was lavished on Tad, "the pet of the nation." The boy was passionately affectionate—his father's inseparable companion. A word from Mr. Lincoln would make him laugh gleefully or melt him to tears. In the solemn Cabinet meetings he played about, sometimes falling asleep on the floor or in his father's lap. He accompanied the President to Fortress Monroe, and clung to his father's hand when Lincoln strode through the streets of fallen Richmond. While the President was making his last speech, from the northern portico of the White House,

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little Tad stood by, catching the leaves of his father's manuscript as they floated down to him. When they came too slowly to suit the boy, he demanded in a piping voice:

"Papa-day, give me another paper" (Tad's pet name for his father was "Papa-day"). The little fellow had a nervous impediment in his speech and strangers could not well understand him. But his father understood his afflicted boy—every word! No matter who was in conference with the President, nor what grave matters might be discussed by Seward, Stanton or Sumner,—if little Tad spoke, his father's fond face bent tenderly over him. Senators and secretaries were often annoyed by Tad's interruptions. All these things combined to intensify Lincoln's yearning devotion to little Tad. This passionate tenderness was more than mere doting indulgence.

As for the boy himself, he did not care for any other playmate. One of

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Lincoln's life-guard has recorded the statement that the only times that President Lincoln ever seemed genuinely happy were while they were romping through the stately old rooms of the Executive Mansion together, both whooping like wild Indians, playing horse or carrying the boy pickaback, or holding him high on his shoulders where he had always been in the habit of carrying the boys, when Willie was playing too,—Willie on one shoulder and Tad on the other. At such times Tad's small cup of joy was brimful, and he could give no fuller expression to it than by chuckling and shouting: "O Papa-day!—Papa-day!"

Where Tad had been the night of Lincoln's assassination no one knew exactly, but Thomas Pendel, the faithful old doorkeeper at the White House, relates that the little boy came in at the basement door very late and clambered up the lower stairway with heartbroken cries of—

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“Tom Pen! Tom Pen! They’ve killed
Papa-day! They’ve killed Papa-day!”

* * * * *

They brought Mrs. Lincoln home in a state of collapse. The only wonder is that the horrible scene of which she had been a witness did not bereave her utterly of her reason. During the gusts of grief to which she gave way in spite of herself, little Tad would look up at her in terror and cry out:

“Don’t cry so, Mamma, or you will break my heart!”

Then the horror-stricken mother would clasp the child in a passionate embrace, and cover his little upturned face with kisses and tears, summoning all the resolution of which she was capable, for the sake of her little boy. Between the two, his mother and his little brother, poor Robert had need of all the manly tenderness of his nature, which was “like his father’s,” they said.

The terrific strain was too great for the desolate little woman who had been

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widowed by the most hideous cruelty, and she lay for many weeks, utterly prostrated, unable to go and be present at the burial of her husband and Willie,—unable even to leave the White House to President Johnson and his large family.

Poor little Tad was sad and lonely. He sorely missed his father. He would wander from room to room as if looking for some one. Many times a day he murmured:

“O Papa-day! where’s my Papa-day? I’m tired of playing alone. I want to play ‘together’ again, a little while—just this once—please, Papa-day!”

His awful loneliness seemed to haunt his dreams. The ever-watchful door-keeper, or one of the life-guard, would lie down beside the little fellow and try to soothe and comfort him through the troubled nights. One moment he seemed in his dreams to be romping again with his great playfellow, gurg-

ling and chuckling and crying out, "O Papa-day! Papa-day!" Then the sense of his great sorrow pervaded his slumbers, and he would sob, "O Papa-day! where's Papa-day?"

"Your papa's gone," whispered his companion brokenly,—*"gone to Heaven."*

Little Tad listened and opened his eyes. "Do you think Papa-day's happy there?" he asked eagerly.

"Yes, yes, I'm *sure* of it, Taddie, dear, your papa's happy now."

"O, I'm glad, *so* glad!" sighed the little boy—"for Papa-day never was happy here."

